

In confirmation of my opinion that *laglaizei* is a melanic aberration of *occipitalis*, I may say I have seen three examples of *rufotinctus* in which the yellow has been more or less replaced by blue.

Mr. W. L. SCLATER sent the following :—

NOTES ON AFRICAN BIRDS (Larks, Flycatchers,
and Waxbills).

Some years ago the late Captain Shelley described (Bull. B. O. C. xiv. 1904, p. 82) a very remarkable Lark from Kordofan which he placed with some hesitation in the genus *Calendula* under the name *C. dunni*, after the original collector. Since that date it has been obtained by Captain Angus Buchanan in the Damergu country to the north of Nigeria and by Admiral Lynes in Darfur.

Both Hartert (Nov. Zool. 1921, p. 130, and 1924, p. 42) and Lynes ('Ibis,' 1924, p. 701) hesitated as to its generic relation, and both seem agreed that it was certainly not rightly placed in *Calendula*, a monotypic genus with one species confined to South Africa.

Under these circumstances, and after a careful comparison of the material, it seems not unreasonable to propose a new generic name for this remarkable little Lark, and I would call it

Eremalanda, gen. nov.,

with type *Calendula dunni* Shelley.

The distinguishing characters are as follows :—Bill short, stout, and Finch-like, resembling that of *Pyrrhulanda*, the culmen strongly curved downwards ; nostrils concealed by forwardly-growing plumelets ; wing with the outer primary narrow and attenuated, about one-third the length of the second, which again is approximately equal to the 3rd and 4th ; longest secondaries almost reaching the tips of the primaries ; tarsus rather slender and far exceeding the length of the culmen ; tail-feathers except the two centre ones blackish, the outer pair with a white external web

only ; general colour rufous, with darker rufous centres to the feathers not well marked ; no dark lining to the wing ; sexes alike.

This little Lark appears to be nearest to *Pyrrhulauda*, from which it differs chiefly in the absence of sexual differentiation and in the lining-colour of the wings.

THE SABOTA LARKS.

When looking over the Sabota Larks in the Natural History Museum, I found a long series collected by Dr. Ansorge at Catumbella in Benguella which I could not identify satisfactorily. These birds were much paler than the typical race and have a comparatively short bill. I sent an example to Dr. Stresemann for comparison with *Mirafra sabota plebeja* Cab. and *M. s. waibeli* Grote, and he kindly informs me that it is quite distinct from either and is undoubtedly a new racial form, and I propose to name it after the collector :

Mirafra sabota ansorgei, subsp. nov. r

The characters are briefly as follows :—Resembling *M. s. sabota*, but much paler, and with pale sandy, not rich rufous, edgings to the feathers of the back and wings ; below almost white, with no tawny wash and a few brown narrow streaks on the chest ; bill about the same size as that of *M. s. sabota*. From *M. s. naevia* it differs in its small bill.

Type a female, collected by Dr. W. J. Ansorge at Catumbella in Benguella, 6. viii. 05. B.M. Reg. No. 1905.11.22.173.

Measurements. Length in skin about 135 mm. ; wing 82 ; tail 52 ; tarsus 23 ; culmen 13.

In addition to the good series of thirteen examples collected by Dr. Ansorge, there are two males obtained by Messrs. Woosnam and Legge at Lehutitu (see Ogilvie-Grant, *Ibis*, 1912, p. 375) in the Kalahari. These are intermediate between the typical and the Benguella races, but perhaps rather nearer *M. s. ansorgei*.

In returning the Benguella Lark, Dr. Stresemann kindly

sent me for examination several types of species of *Mirafra* apparently not represented in the British Museum, including that of *M. sabota waibeli* Grote (Journ. Orn. 1922, p. 46: Okaukwejo, Ovampoland). This last has the large bill of *M. s. navia*, but is distinctly less rufous, as is pointed out in the original description, and appears to represent *M. s. navia* in Ovampoland. It has nothing to do with the Benguella bird.

We have, therefore, the following races of Sabota Larks:—

MIRAFRA SABOTA SABOTA (Smith).

Griqualand West and northern Cape Province (Deelfontein) north to Matabeleland east through the Transvaal to Zululand.

MIRAFRA S. ANSORGEI W. Sel.

Benguella, south-east to the Kalahari.

MIRAFRA S. PLEBEJA Cab.

Portuguese Congo (and perhaps northern Angola).

MIRAFRA S. NÆVIA Strickl.

Damaraland and Great Namaqualand south to the Orange River at Upington.

MIRAFRA S. WAIBELI Grote.

Ovampoland.

MIRAFRA STRÜMPELLI.

Dr. Stresemann has kindly sent me the type of this species described by Reichenow (Orn. Monatsb. 1910, p. 191: Ngaundere, N. Cameroon). As was suspected by Mr. Bates, who has explored the highlands of Cameroon with such success, Reichenow's type is undoubtedly identical with *Helicorys modesta saturator* Bannerman (Bull. B. O. C. xlii. 1922, p. 141: Tibati), and the race must be known in future as *Helicorys modesta strümpelli*.

MIRAFRA NIGRESCENS.

An examination of the type of this species, also described by Reichenow (Orn. Monatsb. 1900, p. 39), proves that it belongs to the *M. africana* group, of which many races have been described and which ranges from Nigeria to Natal. The type, and only example, was obtained at the Elton Pass in the Ukinga district to the north of Lake Nyasa by Dr. Fülleborn. It is quite a distinct race and the darkest and blackest of all I have examined.

CHLOROPETELLA SUAHELICA Roberts.

Through the kindness of Mr. Austin Roberts, I have been privileged to examine the type of *Chloropetella suaheica* obtained by him at Myiai on 27 January, 1917; this place was an outpost during the war, and is about 40 miles southwest of Dar es Salaam in what is now Tanganyika Territory. The bird was subsequently described in the 'Annals of the Transvaal Museum' (vol. vi. 1917, p. 1).

On comparing the bird with our series of African Flycatchers, Mr. Wells and I were at once struck with its resemblance to *Erythrocerus holochlorus* Erlanger (Orn. Monatsb. 1901, p. 181), obtained by him on the Lower Juba River at Solole.

There is only one example of Erlanger's species in the British Museum—a female obtained by Colonel Stephenson Clarke's collector at Gobwen on the Lower Juba with a wing of 44 mm. Mr. Roberts's bird resembles it in every respect except that the wing is larger, about 48 mm.

Both these birds have the tail about the same length as the wing, while in *Erythrocerus* it is distinctly longer; the bill, too, is broader and blacker than in *Erythrocerus*. The distinctions from *Chloropeta* are also quite well marked, as was pointed out by Mr. Roberts in his excellent diagnosis of *Chloropetella*.

I am therefore of opinion that this genus should be

maintained, and that two races differing only in size should be recognized, viz. :—

CHLOROPETELLA HOLOCHROUS HOLOCHROUS (Erlanger).

Distr. The Juba River swamps.

CHLOROPETELLA HOLOCHROUS SUAHELICA Roberts.

Distr. Coastal districts of Tanganyika Territory.

ESTRILDA XANTHOPHRYS, sp. nov.

Mr. J. Delacour recently brought alive and presented to the British Museum two little Waxbills of the genus *Estrilda* which do not appear to be identical with any described race. They were obtained from a dealer in Marseilles and are said to have been imported from Senegal.

They were both found to be females with fair-sized ovaries, and we may presume were adult. They resemble *Estrilda troglodytes* (formerly known as *E. cinerea*), a species widely spread in Africa from Senegal to the Nile Valley, but have the characteristic bright red eye-stripe replaced by a rich yellow one, and are characterized by the absence of any trace of the pinkish wash on the underparts, which are ashy-grey very finely banded with pale brown. About the vent there are slight traces of a yellowish streak where in *E. troglodytes* is a conspicuous splash of pink. The back, too, is distinctly of a darker shade of brown. Iris reddish-brown, bill orange, feet purple-brown.

Dimensions. Wing 44 mm., tail 40, ulna 4, tarsus 15—in this respect not differing essentially from *E. troglodytes*.

Type (a female said to come from Senegal), B.M. Reg. No. 1926.9.26.1.

I am, of course, well aware of the danger of describing as new a form of doubtful origin and chiefly differing in the substitution of orange-yellow for red, but the little birds were so very distinct-looking in life that it seems advisable to draw attention to them by naming them, and it is to be hoped that collectors and observers in Senegal may look out for them and perhaps procure additional examples